

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Prior to entry of this response, Claims 1-24 were pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 9, and 17 are independent. In the Office Action dated November 15, 2004, the specification and the drawings were objected to and Claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Following this response, Claims 1-24 remain pending in this application. Applicant hereby addresses the Examiner's objections and rejections in turn.

I. Objection to the Specification

In the Office Action dated November 15, 2004, the Examiner objected to the specification due to missing status information of a co-pending application. The specification has been amended, and Applicant respectfully submits that the amendment overcomes this objection and adds no new matter.

II. Objection to the Drawings

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings as being inconsistent with the specification. Subject to the approval of the Examiner, it is proposed to substitute FIG. 1 with the attached substitute FIG. 1. Applicant respectfully submits that substitute FIG. 1 overcomes this objection and adds no new matter.

III. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as their invention. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The Patent Act requires that through the patent claims, an applicant must particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which he regards as his invention. (See 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2; "The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.") The test for whether a claim meets the definiteness requirement is "whether one skilled in the art would understand the bounds of the claim when read in light of the specification."

The Examiner states that Claim 9 implies something different than Claim 1. (See Office Action, page 2, lines 4-7.) Applicant respectfully submits that at least because the claims as originally filed are considered a part of the specification, the specification clearly contemplates the subject matter claimed in Claims 1 and 9. Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2 requires the specification to conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention, not that the Claims include the same implications.

Furthermore, the Examiner stated, regarding Claim 1, that "the first circuit has not been recited as generating an assembly signal". (See Office Action, page 2, line 8.) Applicant respectfully submit that Claim 1 recites "an assembly signal generated by the

first circuit.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the first circuit has been recited as generating an assembly signal.

Moreover, the Examiner states that Claim 3, lines 2-3, is inconsistent with lines 7-8 of Claim 1 because the latter calls for the at least a portion of the encoded status flag information to be cleared whereas the former calls for the same quantity to be forced to a selected value. (See Office Action, page 2, lines 9-12.) Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 3 is not inconsistent with Claim 1 at least because the recited quantity may be both cleared and set to a selected value, for example. Accordingly, one skilled in the art would understand the bounds of Claims 1 and 3 when read in light of the specification. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 9, 11, 12, 17, 19, and 20 are not inconsistent for at least the same reasons as set out above regarding Claims 1 and 3.

In light of the above remarks, Applicant asserts that the rejection of Claims 1-24 is not supported. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of Claims 1-24.

IV. Conclusion

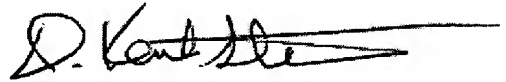
In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. The preceding arguments are based only on the arguments in the Office Action, and therefore do not address patentable aspects of the invention that were not addressed by the Examiner in the Office Action. The claims may include other elements that are not shown, taught, or suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, the

preceding argument in favor of patentability is advanced without prejudice to other bases of patentability.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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